

Catholics and Citizenship

By Most Rev. THOMAS O'DOHERTY, D.D., Bishop of Clonfert

AND

The Influence of Women in Catholic Ireland

By the Rev. J. S. SHEEHY, C.M.



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BISHOP OF CLONFERT

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CATHOLICS AND CITIZENSHIP.

By Most Rev. THOMAS O'DOHERTY, D.D.,
Bishop of Clonfert.



THERE are many angles from which this subject may be viewed, just as there are many activities in which a citizen may be engaged. But I have been reminded by the President that this address should be a short one, and hence, I shall confine myself to an examination of the relations which should exist between the Citizens and the Supreme power in the State, according to the teaching of the Catholic Church.

Most thinking men will admit that, in the words of the Second Plenary Council of Baltimore, “ the authority and influence of the Church will be found to be the most efficacious support of the temporal authority by which the Society is governed.” And the more a Catholic is devoted to the teaching and practices of his Church the better citizen he is. For the good Catholic is an upright, just, clean-living, honourable man, who knows and discharges his duties to God, to his neighbour, and to his country.

As far as the last is concerned, it is an important dogma of our faith that civil authority is derived from God alone. This doctrine is clearly found in the Old Testament, and is still more clearly emphasised in the New. No wonder, therefore, that it has been constantly put forward by the Church against the false theories of modern philosophy. Leo XIII. sums it up as follows:—

“ As no society can hold together unless some one is over all, directing all to strive earnestly for the common good, every civilized community must have a ruling authority; and this authority, no less than Society itself, has its source in nature, and has, consequently, God for its Author. Hence it follows that all public power must proceed from God. For God alone is the true and supreme Lord of the world. Everything without exception must be subject to Him, and must serve Him; so that whosoever

holds the right to govern, holds it from one sole and single source, namely, God, the Sovereign Ruler of all. 'There is no power but from God' (Rom. xiii., 1)"—Ency. *Immortale Dei*.

It is a disputed question among Catholic theologians whether political power is given by God in the first instance to the people and by them delegated to the rulers, or whether the people have merely the function of designating their rulers, to whom authority is then directly and immediately given by God. The second opinion seems more in consonance with the general teaching of Leo XIII. in many of his Encyclicals. But all are agreed that, in the ultimate analysis, the power of the ruler comes from God. It would be heresy to deny it.

From this doctrine important consequences follow. The legitimate rulers of the State, while acting in that capacity, are the instruments and ministers of God Himself. They are Superiors, acting with divine authority, and hence the first and most essential duty of the citizen is obedience to all lawful enactments. One might infer so much by the light of reason alone. But we can point, in addition, to the inspired word of God:—

"Let every soul," says St. Paul, "be subject to the higher powers: for there is no power but from God: and those that are, are ordained of God. Therefore he that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God. And they that resist, purchase to themselves damnation. For princes are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil. Wilt thou not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise from the same. For he is God's minister to thee, for good. But if thou do that which is evil, fear: for he beareth not the sword in vain. For he is God's minister: an avenger to execute the wrath upon him that doth evil. Wherefore, be subject of necessity, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake. For therefore you also pay tribute. For they are ministers of God, serving unto this purpose." (Rom. xiii., 1-6).

When St. Paul wrote these words, Nero was the ruler of the Roman Empire. Yet even he is twice called the "minister of God"; and his tax-gatherers are also "ministers of God, serving unto this purpose." Resistance to his authority purchases damnation. Words could

not be stronger to inculcate the duty of obedience to the just laws and the payment of all lawful taxes. The personal character of the ruler does not count at all, as far as the duty of obedience is concerned. No more frightful monster than Nero ever held the reins of power. And yet he was "God's minister," and resistance to him was a crime deserving of everlasting punishment.

This does not mean, of course, that we are bound to slavish obedience in all circumstances, and no matter what the nature of the law. An Edict of the State may be in conflict with God's law, and then resistance is not only lawful but a duty. As St. Peter says: "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts v., 29). Again, when a law or tax is patently unjust it may be resisted, even with violence. But in this case the public must consider whether the resistance is likely to be successful and whether graver evils may not result from it. Generally speaking, it will be more prudent to defer until the next elections a reckoning with authorities who have violated the boundary of their jurisdiction.

The second duty of the citizen is respect and reverence for legitimate civil authorities. This respect is due not only to the heads of the Government but also, in varying measure of course, to all public officials. For they are all "ministers of God, serving unto this purpose." In continuation of the passage already quoted, St. Paul says:—

"Render, therefore, to all men their dues. Tribute, to whom tribute is due: custom, to whom custom: fear, to whom fear: *honour, to whom honour.*"

Whatever their personal worth, they are, for the time being, invested by God with civil authority. They are His "ministers," and, as such, deserve our reverence. It is no degradation for any right-thinking man to respect them in that capacity. Rather is it a duty incumbent on us, according to the clear teaching of St. Paul. And it is a duty which is recognised as binding in all civilized communities, even where democracy is most advanced.

Many of us in Ireland will require a little schooling in this particular matter. Those who ruled our destinies in the past were regarded by the majority as unjust aggressors, no matter how tricked out with the trappings of State. Castle rule and all it implied, from the political

judge to the prying policeman, never won the real respect of the general community. They were regarded as the instruments and symbols of a foreign tyranny. Generation after generation of Irishmen hoped and prayed for the day of their departure. So, we have had a tradition, deepening in intensity throughout seven hundred and fifty years, not of reverence and love for those placed over us, but of hatred and contempt. The passionate soul-rebellion against alien domination was with us from youth to age, even when never a blow was being struck for freedom. "Honour to whom honour"? Yes. But it was felt deep down in most Irish hearts that even St. Paul himself would not have deemed it due to *them*!

We are blessed to see the day for which others fought and prayed. Whatever may be said regarding certain restrictions in our Constitution, the broad fact remains, clear as the light of day, that our civil authorities, from the President to the humblest member of the guard, are our very own. We must, then, exorcise the old spirit which prompted us to despise, outwit, oppose, harass the representatives of civil authority. We have rulers now whom we cannot but regard as lawful, and we must learn to cultivate towards them that spirit of reverence and honour which the Apostle commands. They have heavy burdens to bear, and should have our sympathy and co-operation as well as our respect. Helpful criticism is wholesome; but in speaking or writing we should remember that we are dealing with men who wield the authority given them by God.

The principles I have discussed, regarding obedience and respect, are applicable to any species of legitimate civil authority. "The right to rule," in the words of Leo XIII., "is not necessarily bound up with any special mode of government. It may take this or that form, provided only that it be of a nature to ensure the general welfare."—(*Immortale Dei*).

In most modern States, our own included, the people are, or may be, the determining factor in shaping their own destinies. And hence it may be said that a people has the Government it deserves. If the laws of the State are unjust, oppressive, tyrannical, if they interfere unduly with private rights, the remedy is at hand. The power of

the franchise is a splendid check, if intelligently used, to any attempt at misgovernment. Hence the voters at Parliamentary elections are entrusted with a very important duty. On them ultimately will depend the character of the Government. A well-informed and conscientious body of electors can always be masters of the political situation. It will be their duty to elect only such members as will promote the common good. This duty may easily become one of grave obligation in conscience when, for instance, there is danger that a sufficient number of trustworthy members may not be elected to dictate what is for the public interest or to oppose measures which violate private or family rights or those of the Church.

We do not know what the future has in store, and while we hope for the best, we may take it for granted that in this country, as in others, all sorts and conditions of men will make their appeal to the electorate—the honest man with lofty ideals, the self-seeker, the man with pet theories and pernicious principles. The electors will have to keep their eyes open. It will not do to be led away by catch-cries, formulas, half-truths, or any of the other arts by which men of wrong principles, or of none, strive to foist themselves into positions of power and profit. The Irish people are pretty shrewd judges of character. The time will come when that quality will be tested. It shall then be the aim of each constituency to elect as its representative one whose character stands high, whose principles are above suspicion, who will be a credit and a benefit to those who elected him.

Citizens have their rights, as well as their duties. Justice must be administered without fear or favour. Public offices of emolument or honour must be given only to those who are qualified to fill them. Citizens have also the right to be protected in person and property, and to have their temporal interests promoted, as far as it is in the power of the State to do so. Private liberty and rights must be inviolate, except in so far as the public good absolutely demands the contrary. In modern times there is only too much evidence to show that the State is inclined to interfere unduly with the rights of the individual and of the family. These rights the Church has always defended. And all good Catholics should see to it that theories, de-

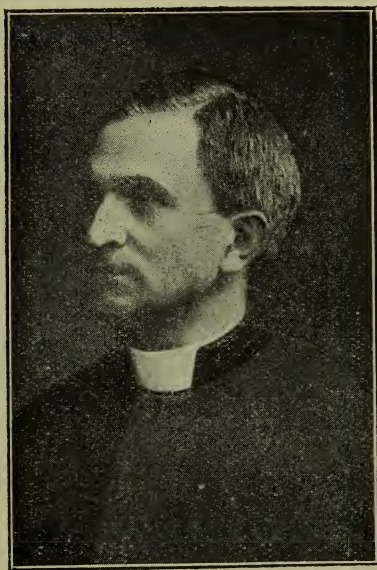
rived from foreign and materialistic sources, will never be allowed to operate in Ireland to the detriment of individual liberty, the sacredness of domestic life or the inalienable rights of the Church.

There is left one other right for which scant respect is shown in our day. It is the right of the people to live their lives in well-ordered peace and security, in co-operation with the Government accepted by the majority. In every civilized community the political situation is governed by majority rule. Any other principle can but lead to anarchy. In Ireland a Government has been set up which is supported by the vast majority of the Nation. They have accepted the Treaty with England made by their own plenipotentiaries and approved by the majority of their representatives. Suppose we grant that the Treaty was imposed "under threat of terrible and immediate war." Have not the people the right to determine what should be done in any set of political circumstances which may arise? Will any one say they are not entitled to accept a slightly limited charter of freedom when faced with the dreadful alternative of devastation and slaughter?

The government has been formed and the members of that government are vested with the authority of God. And yet there are men fanatical enough, wicked enough to resist that government by force of arms. Whence do they derive their authority to take human life and seize and destroy property? It would be blasphemy to say that any such authority comes from God, and He is the only source of all power. They prate of the elections of 1918 and 1920. The Irish people had the right of decision then. Have the same people lost that right in 1922? Or may every fanatic or bully or robber gather around him men of his own type and set himself in armed opposition to the government selected by the people? That way lies anarchy and demoralisation and the ultimate ruin of the State. The men who have proved recalcitrant to ordered government have already upon their heads a frightful account of murder and injustice. Their so-called oaths will not save them from their responsibility before God and man.

While this unholy and unhappy disorder lasts it is the duty of every citizen to support the civil and military

authorities by every means available. Only in this way can we advance towards the destiny of our race. We must rally round our government with more than usual devotion until the day comes when peace and order are restored and its members can devote their splendid abilities to the rebuilding of what is shattered; to the development of the manifold resources of our fair and fertile land; to the promotion of the welfare of every class of which our nation is composed. May God speed that day!



The Rev. J. S. SHEEHY, C.M., who delivered the following Address.

THE INFLUENCE OF WOMEN

— IN —

CATHOLIC IRELAND.

By the Rev. J. S. SHEEHY, C.M.



WOMEN IN ANCIENT IRELAND.

Oh! women of Ireland, what a glorious inheritance is yours, an influence for good, great—in fact immeasurable—nobly won, well deserved; consequently bringing with it a serious responsibility! You have the making, or marring, of Catholic Ireland in your hands—that is your *influence*. In no other land has the potency for good of women been greater in the ages that are past than in Ireland. In a strange way, in the old Celtic imagination, Ireland was woman; and woman was Ireland. Ireland and women were convertible terms. It is always as a woman her poets have thought of her. They imagined her at one time as a proud warrior queen to whom the highest fealty was due. At other times they thought of her pathetically as an uncrowned queen, sitting in grief on the rocks of the Western Sea, the sorrows of a thousand years making dark her ever youthful eyes:

“Thy sorrow and the sorrow of the sea
Are sisters; the sad winds are of thy race
Mournful and Mighty Mother.”

Many names were her's under which she was hidden from her oppressors—“Kathleen-ni-Houlihan,” “My Dark Rosaleen,” “Innisfail,” “Banba,” and others. And they called her in pity and love, the “Poor Old Woman,” being moved to tears at her sorrow. At times, also, not daring to pronounce her name, they hid it under some symbol, mystic and beautiful, such as “The Brightness of Brightness met on the lonely way,” or the “Little Black Rose”; and always into the lovely vision her poets had

glimpsed of Ireland, there were gathered the features of dear mortal woman—real Irish girls they had known and loved. All this shows how idealised was woman in ancient Eire. The women were the inspiration and pride of all that was great and sacred in the land. In the uplifting of the Nation the men of Eire—I mean the heroes and leaders—all through the ages performed prodigies of valour, and so were great “in forum, field and fane.” But we must never forget, as it has been truly said, that a “Nation is what its women make its men”—a fact, as regards our ancient land at any rate, testified to by our sad and glorious history; for up to our time the standard of virtue and valour was never lowered. The women were always saving the Nation through the men—a glorious memory for us to-day.

WOMEN IN CHRISTIAN IRELAND.

More emphatic still did the influence of women become when Christianity was established in the land. We know the reason. The ideal of Christian Womanhood set up in the world by the example of the Virgin Mother of God has been grasped in all its beautiful significance in no land so clearly, so lovingly, so whole-heartedly as in our own dear Island of Erin. This high ideal of womanhood has always kept the nation faithful and strong. Of course in every land where Christianity was established the example of the Virgin Mary raised the public tone and fixed a high standard of moral conduct. As the Rationalist historian—Lecky—when treating of the Middle Ages, says: “The world is governed by its ideals and seldom or never has there been one which has exercised a more profound and, on the whole, a more salutary influence than the mediæval conception of the Virgin. For the first time woman was elevated to her rightful position. Into a harsh, ignorant and benighted age, this ideal type infused a conception of gentleness and purity unknown to the proudest generation of the past. In the pages of living tenderness, which many a monkish writer has left in honour of his celestial patron; in the millions who, in many lands and in many ages, have sought with no barren desire to mould their character into her image; in those holy maidens who, for the love of Mary, have separated themselves from the glories and pleasures

of the world, to seek in fastings and vigils and humble charity, to render themselves worthy of her benediction; in the new sense of honour, in the chivalrous respect, in the softening of manners, in the refinement of tastes, and in many other ways we detect its influence; all that is best in Europe clustered around it, and it is the origin of many of the purest elements of our civilisation." All these effects of Mary's example have been observed in Ireland most truly since the advent of Christianity. Take the mothers of Ireland! What a galaxy of holiness! What mothers must have reigned in the homesteads of Ireland, the poorest even and the humblest, to make the purity of the Irish maiden a proverb—nay a portent—for the unsympathising world outside! What good mothers they must have been! What faith, what courage they must have had! The mothers who helped to keep the Irish race so true to the Catholic faith through all the perils and temptations of the dark penal days! The sons and daughters thank the high heavens for such mothers. As a gentle poet writes:—

"Of all the graces of my heart I praise o'er every other,
This, that my Maker gave to me, an Irish Catholic
Mother."

The sons suffered and died for their faith, and the daughters for their honour. In peace they worked to raise the nation and make it prosper. Both sons and daughters of such mothers also became apostles, and evangelised other nations; the sons, as missionaries, by preaching; the daughters, by their high standard of virtue, whether in religious orders or in family life. Napoleon used to say, "What France needs is good mothers." We in Ireland have had this treasure, thank God. Irish mothers in the past have been the chief agents of God's bounty to their children. They thus stood forth in the most sacred, most potent and enduring influence in the land. We can answer the question of the inspired writer; "Who shall find the valiant woman"? "Far and from the uttermost coasts is the price of her. The heart of her husband trusted in her She will render him good and not evil all the days of his life." Irish wives have been for their husbands a spiritual prop, sometimes badly needed, always appreciated by all true-hearted Irishmen. As Ruskin says

“ The path of a good woman is always strewn with flowers; but they rise behind her steps, not before them. “ We hear,” he continues, “ of the mission and rights of women, as if these could ever be separated from the mission and rights of men.” This the wives of Irishmen generally realise. To strengthen it still more, will, I hope, be one of the results of this address. Surely the poet Wordsworth well expresses the ideal of the women of Ireland:—

“ Perfect woman, nobly planned
To warm, to comfort, and command.
And yet a spirit still and bright
With something of an Angel light.”

WHAT WILL THE WOMEN OF TO-DAY DO?

This is your inheritance, you women of Ireland; this is your ideal. What is it to mean for you? Are you proud of it? Will you honour it or fling it aside? And unhampered by it, rush headlong into the broad way of pleasure and self-indulgence of every kind, “ the primrose path of dalliance,” the way of false independence and alluring freedom? The great question is, especially for you who are at the parting of the ways, “ standing with reluctant feet, where the brook and river meet:” the great question is: What really will you do with your lives here and now in Ireland, in the year of Our Lord 1922? Will you be the bane or the blessing of man; a ministering angel or a wily temptress; dragging him down to the mire or raising him to the stars? Will you permit me, my dear friends, to put some suggestions forward? I do so with great diffidence, but with the kindest feelings and esteem for you all. I know what a blessed influence you can be in the lives of men, helping them, encouraging them, moving them to noble efforts, raising them above the rut of commonplace, drab existence, to a higher plane of self-sacrifice and social service, touching them with the magic of romance and chivalry, sanctifying and blessing their characters. Especially the picture I have sketched for you of the influence of Irish women in the past fills me with the greatest confidence in the women of to-day, that they will not lower the flag. But you must remember at the outset that the power for good you will wield to-day must be rooted as in the past, in your religion. Be true Christians,

profoundly and sincerely religious, making God the keynote of your lives; thus only will you attain to the ideal of your strength and vigour, of which Christian heroines have given us so many examples in the past history of Ireland. It was the model of womanhood, which the example of the Mother of God set up on Irish soil, that gave all the strength she had to the Irish woman of the past. The same will be true to-day. It is religion, my friends, which will establish and keep your influence sweet and salutary. "Her ways are beautiful ways and all her paths are peace." There are things wrong in Ireland to-day, my friends, so wrong indeed that people ask: "Where is the religion of Ireland? Is it dead"? Has Patrick's prayer not been heard at all? Things are not so bad as all that. But I am afraid that we must say that religion has lost its hold on some of the men of Ireland; otherwise there would not be so much selfishness, love of pleasure, and money, envy and lack of charity; human life would be more sacred, others' rights would be more respected. I fear that religion has lost some of its sanction with the women of Ireland, or I should say with some of the women of Ireland. Its true idea has been lost. Religion affects the mind, heart, and will. It puts truth into the mind, goodness into the heart, strength to do what is right into the will. It counsels above all, respect and obedience to God's representative, Holy Church and its Ministers. It does not mistake emotion for piety, nor the display of religious symbols and seemingly religious practices in unlawful proceedings, as giving sanction to these proceedings. True religion is founded on humility and charity, "Love is the fulfilling of the law," not hate. Some of these false colours are tarnishing the beautiful picture of the holy womanhood of Ireland received from the past. "Dark Rosaleen" is being besmirched, her beauty tarnished. I appeal to you here to-night to right this great wrong. A woman is a giver of life, not a harbinger of death. Help Irish men and women to live; to live their best lives for God and country. Discourage the taking of human life in a physical sense; above all don't kill the soul of Ireland by killing or atrophying its "religious sense." Work for an honourable and lasting peace between brother Irishmen. These are words of general appeal. Let me now come down to constructive work, to the definite duties of

the Irishwomen of to-day, working under the blessed influence of religious principles. Let us view the mothers, daughters, sisters of Ireland, with their personal and social responsibilities.

MOTHER AND CHILD FROM THE PHYSICAL STANDPOINT.

A mother is a giver of life, I repeat, not a harbinger of death. This applies in a physical and a spiritual sense. To a woman—his mother—the child owes his life, his bodily life; but in a far higher sense he owes her his spiritual life, his soul's life. The mother's life is the child's life in its early days. How important it is that during that period the mother should live her best life first physically—I mean be healthy, feed and nourish herself well. It has been remarked that Irish women do not feed well, i.e., they eat and drink the wrong things, and they don't eat at the right times. A woman can never be healthy herself, nor rear a healthy family, whose diet is mainly tea and white bread or pastry. It does not contain the essential elements to form blood, bone, nerves, and other vital organs. As the Bishop of Ross writes: "The result is a jerrybuilt house that tumbles down at the first shock. Hence the decayed teeth, poor blood, weak hearts, delicate lungs that give way under severe strain. In this matter our women can do more to arrest national decay and promote industrial revival than all national forces combined. What portion of the nation's wealth can be compared to its sons and daughters? And their health and vigour, even their lives, are in the hands of women; are in the hands of the mothers of Ireland." Consumption and insanity—almost become national diseases—must to a large extent be laid at the doors of the newer generation of Irish mothers. The wrong psychological state of many of the young men and women to-day has arisen from flouting plain physiological principles in matters of diet, exercise, occupations, and the women are the chief offenders here. The feeding question must, therefore, be seriously considered. "Forty years ago," Dr. Kelly writes, "the staple articles of food of the population—I speak of the smaller peasantry and working classes, who form the bulk of our population—were milk, potatoes, oaten meal porridge, whole flour bread, eggs, butter, and a little meat This diet contained all

the necessary and most useful elements for building up boys and girls into strong, healthy, vigorous men and women." The women of to-day must go back to the food of the old people of Ireland. They must take healthy exercise, mostly in the daytime and in the open air, as often as possible in the country. If they wish to preserve their bodily health and their nerves, their normal atmosphere must not be the cinema, the theatre, or the ball-room. If they wish as mothers to transmit healthy frames and powerful constitutions to the future generation they must realise their responsibilities to the nation. Looking after their own health then first they will next watch over the health of their children, especially during their critical early years, nursing them in the way prescribed by mother nature herself, and when regular feeding begins, seeing to it that the right sort is given to them in proper portions, and at the right times. An important element in the health of children is cleanliness. Mothers should not spare soap and water. The children, though their clothes be poor, should never wear torn or dirty clothes. But great as may be the effect of cleanliness on the health of children, the effect on their characters will be greater still. It will be the beginning of proper pride or self-respect

MOTHER AND CHILD FROM THE SPIRITUAL STANDPOINT.

It is from the spiritual side, however, that the mother's influence is greatest. Even before the birth of her child the mother is influencing the child's soul. It behoves her especially to be good in conduct during this period. It is a time especially to keep near God. Mothers, I ask you during this period, cherish noble thoughts, have calm, subdued sentiments, and do good deeds, acts of thoughtfulness, kindness, unselfishness. Above all, be pious and religious-minded, united to and loving God. If a mother leads such a life from its physical and spiritual aspect she will be helping her child to begin its life under the best auspices, grow and advance in body and soul owing to these most blessed impressions. Then when reason dawns it is at the mother's knee that the child should lisp its first prayers. "A mother," wrote the Bishop of Newport, "who cannot teach her boys and girls to pray remains half a stranger to them unto the end. She may clothe them,

caress them, instruct them, but she can never enter the Holy of Holies, where the immortal soul speaks to its Maker. It is religion alone which lifts the eyes of mothers to Heaven and eternity, and thus teaches them that the only true education they can give their children is to educate them for eternity." Mothers should realise that for them, at least, the home is the sphere of their best activities; that in fact it is the realm in which they rule with undisputed sway. The "New Woman" attacks Christianity, forgetting that it is to Christianity she owes every privilege she has. It was Christianity raised woman from being the chattel and plaything of man—which she was in every Pagan land except in the old days of Erin; it was Christianity, I repeat, that raised woman from her lowly position to be the equal of man, his helpmate, in fact made her the queen of his home, so that it has passed almost into a proverb to say that "the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world." Home duties, feeding and clothing her children, educating and forming their characters will ever, for a large majority of women, be their chief function in life; indeed their pride and glory. Obedience to commands is a great part of the education of children. It is to be feared, however, that both parents at the present time do not insist enough on this. But at the same time be reasonable in demanding obedience. Don't give too exacting orders. Let them be well thought out, and once given insist on being obeyed. Besides obedience to yourselves counsel obedience to God, to His Commandments, to His Representative, the Church, to its Bishops and Priests. In education the formation of character is a most important element. Character is the impress which our actions and habits put on your lives. It has been well said that character is "life dominated by the principles" which rule thought, speech, and action. Impulse should not rule, nor circumstances, but principle—a good principle. Now, a fundamental principle is "Do what is right; and avoid what is wrong." "Do what is right because it is right." It is right when conscience and religion tell us it is right; wrong when conscience and religion say it is wrong. Teach your children to do what is right, not because it pays better to do so, nor because they must do it, but simply because it is right. To secure this, place ideals before them. The

great ideal is the Christian ideal, self-sacrifice and love. Keep up a high moral and religious tone in the house. Let everything be regular: hours for meals, study, play. Bring culture for the children into their leisure hours as well as into their working hours. Make home the happiest place on earth by brightness and the atmosphere of love and kindly service.

WIVES OF TO-DAY.

Beside your duty to your children, my dear ladies, you have your duties to your husbands. Remember "Love's Young Dream." Keep it up to the end of your life's day. Never lose the respect of him to whom you gave your hand and your heart in the golden days of long ago. You will retain that respect if you respect yourselves. Don't relax your efforts. Dress as well, be as neat and as attractive as in the early days of your married life. It would be most regrettable if you failed here. Ah! if you become slovenly and slatternly, and degenerate into a steeple, with tousled hair and dirty face and hands; if you keep your house untidily, and don't prepare and cook meals properly; if you let your children grow up ill-kept in dress, uncouth in manner, and idle in disposition; it will be an awful shock for a husband after marriage to make these discoveries; or worse, if he detects some serious fault of character; if he discovers that the girl of his dreams is a drunkard or a wanton. Alas, his home and career may be blasted, and—unless through God's mercy—his own deterioration and fall will be only a matter of time. God save you all from such tragedies! Love then, love on to the end. Be gracious in manner. Smile whenever you can. Welcome at night, after his day's work, your husband, as you sent him forth in the morning with a hearty Godspeed. Sympathise with him in sorrow, fondly tend him when he is sick. Be a real friend to him in all the vicissitudes of life, and your influence for good will only cease with death. Wives thus winning and keeping the real esteem and love of their husbands, order and peace reigning in the home, the children will grow up, fortified by the good example of father and mother, into Christian men and women trained for life's responsibilities, and passing on to their children, and to future generations, all the best traditions of Catholic family life.

DAUGHTERS AND SISTERS OF TO-DAY.

But there are other women in the homes of Ireland besides mothers and wives. There are daughters and sisters. To the daughters, let me quote what the poet says: "We may have many friends," he writes, "but only one mother; and this fact," he adds, "I did not discover till too late." You whose mothers are still living, beware of discovering the truth too late. Discover it now and profit by it. Let not the example of your mother, her love, her self-sacrifice, her almost infinite patience, be lost on you. Reciprocate her love and faithful service. On your part, love not too late, both mother and father. As sisters reflect what you can do for your brothers, especially be real chums with your brothers. What a softening, refining influence you will surely have on them! How much you can do also, for your little sisters, helping mother, lightening her often very heavy and exhausting labours. Help on the social life of the home by your bright manners and kindly disposition. To all young girls, I say, aim at high ideals from the natural and supernatural point of view. Be truthful and honourable, modest and gentle, sincerely pious and practical Catholics. What is called fashion, plays a great part in the lives of all women, especially young women. Some friends of mine suggested that I should come out in terms of condemnation of modern fashion. I may tell you that I have no intention of doing so. But I must say, I do not like the fashions of the day. I hope, however, that I have a sufficiently strong sense of humour, not to set up as a judge of fashion (the Clergy are not in their element here). I am only concerned in regarding fashion from a Moral and Religious point of view—and also indeed from a national point of view. Regarding it in this light, I must say that some of the fashions of the day are not helpful. While I feel this, I don't believe in denunciation. Rather will I say something in the way of appeal. I ask you in your dress not to violate any Commandment of God. Don't so dress that you may give scandal to all right-thinking Christians. Exercise good sense and good taste as well as modesty. Don't be suggestive in dress or movement. Carry yourselves with dignity. You are not forbidden to make yourselves attractive. St. Thomas says it is your privilege, provided the motive be good and you retain Christian self-

respect. To ask you to act against the fashions of the day would be like asking people to stop the Niagara Falls. Though Fashion changes—as long as it lasts it dominates. While keeping in the fashion, in order to avoid singularity, you can so regulate it, in your individual lives, that it will give no offence to pure-minded Christians. Girls who pass the bounds of Christian modesty defeat their own purpose; they disgust decent men, and are often told the truth very plainly. Men in seeking for wives do not select the flirt and the butterfly of fashion, but the self-respecting and modest Christian maiden—the girl of grit and character. Dress by all means in “Decent apparel” as St. Paul counsels “with modesty and sobriety,” avoiding extravagance.

FAULTS OF THE DAY—SNOBBERY, ETC.

A really great evil in modern Irish life is ‘snobbery.’ A people emerging from slavery are always “snobs,” and women are frequently the worst offenders. They ape the manners and customs of those they consider the superior race. They become affected and unnatural. As they advance in wealth especially, they look down on their less fortunate fellow-citizens. They don’t like the “Irish Language”—“it sounds so rough you know”; they don’t like the “Irish Brogue,” which they think “sounds so flat and vulgar.” They cultivate a high-pitched—as they imagine—*English* accent—most unnatural to them—which they will insist upon shouting, especially in trams, forgetting that one of the most beautiful utterances in the world is English spoken by Irish lips with the natural intonation, and without vulgar pronunciation. Then they start the ruin of their children by sending them out of the country to be educated in what they consider “swanky” English schools—some of these schools non-Catholic. The boys and girls come back having in most cases lost their Irish outlook, their simplicity of character, and their real respect for their parents and other relatives, on whom they look down. They have become real snobs. Oh! my friends, pretence and affectation are the curse of the age. Be Irish and Catholic in heart and soul, and your outward conduct will be irreproachable. Be natural without being vulgar. Be kindly and not haughty. Win people; don’t

repel them. A woman's greatest asset is a kindly, gracious, calm manner. Who can resist the smile of a good woman? Cultivate a smiling countenance: It is your grand privilege to make goodness lovely and loveable, and by your very presence to diffuse a kind of sacred atmosphere wherever you move, showing that beauty really is the purest thought and feeling in its truest manifestation. "Whatsoever things are lovely, think of these things." Fight selfishness and excessive love of pleasure—they are dominant vices to-day. "Bear one another's burdens." Be helpful to others. Cultivate a sense of duty, no matter what it may cost. You must carry your crosses like others. This is Christianity. Speaking of a lovely heroine, Shakespeare says: "Her voice was soft and low—an excellent thing in woman," he adds. Yes; voice soft, not strident; feminine, not masculine. Don't be a "sourface." Don't be hard on others, especially other women. All require sympathy and gentle judgment; and if you speak of others at all, speak well of them. Don't ever be gossips. Avoid bitter taunts. Eschew sarcasm. Remember, as Father Faber used to say, "Souls are never won by sarcasm." You want to win people; you wish to continue and enhance in this critical age the salutary influence of the great Irish women of the past. You wish to help the men of this age and the women of this age. Then, "Be good, sweet maids, and let who will be clever. Do noble things, not dream them all day long." The books you read will play an important part in fixing your outlook on life. Avoid frivolous reading. Scrap the picture papers, the magazines and silly novels—mere printed matter of all kinds. Go back to the "Kings of Thought." Read history, especially Irish history. Learn the Irish language. Be to God and Ireland true.

CAREERS FOR WOMEN.

Now a word or two about careers for women. We know that the more a nation advances in civilisation and refinements the greater is the respect and deference paid to women; the more they are trusted the greater responsibilities, therefore, are laid on their shoulders. Personally I am in favour of the "Rights of Women" properly understood. Women, just like men, if they so desire it, may be

doctors or lawyers, may be in business, and enter the political arena. Women have succeeded in all these spheres, often beating men. But at the same time I maintain it is not woman's normal position. Average woman was intended to be the helpmate of man in the married state by Almighty God. In the home, where, as I have said, she is queen, she will find her highest scope for doing good. Think of it! For every child with whom God has blessed her she is the life-giver—physically and spiritually and the trainer for eternity. She is the saviour of immortal souls, “which,” a great Saint says, “is the most Divine of all Divine works.” “For the ten first years of the life of every child,” as the great educationalist, Edward Thring, maintains, “the mother is the teacher and former of the child.” The future of the nation is in the hands of the mothers of the nation. What profession, what scientific pursuit, what oratorical triumph can be compared with that? But what about pursuing a career though married? This aspect of the question has been engaging much attention in England at present on account of the publication of a novel—which has proved one of the “best Sellers” of the season. It is called “This Freedom,” by A. S. M. Hutchinson, and great controversy has started over the main thesis of the novel—which is, that a woman in the married state who keeps up her career in business—Rosalie in the novel is a banker—necessarily neglects her home duties and, as a consequence, her family comes to grief, in fact perishes in tragedy, the mother discovering her mistake too late. The author of this work elaborates what to us Catholics is obvious, that a mother who neglects her family duties to pursue a “career” piles up “wrath against the day of wrath.” Of course occupations and social service which do not interfere with the obligations of home may be helpful instead of harmful. But home duties must always come first. In the married state, therefore, women, though the equals, are the helpmates of men. But in the case of single women, they, too, can be the helpmates of men, and men require their help badly, especially in great spiritual activities. Men require the sympathy and encouragement of women. Even the greatest Saints had their women helpers. St. Vincent de Paul called on Louise de Merillac to help in his marvellous conceptions—the “Sisters of

Charity " and the " Ladies of Charity," and St. Francis de Sales leaned on Jane Frances de Chantal for the founding of the Visitation Order; for the reform of Carmel the chosen souls of the Order found in a Teresa their mainstay and inspiration. And what did Brigid do for Patrick in the infant stages of Catholic Ireland? She was Mary of the Gael—the spiritual mother of a countless progeny of Saints and Martyrs. And what philanthropy? What unselfish charity! What great work for the comfort and elevation of men have been displayed by the Orders in the Catholic Church of single women who have given themselves to God! Then since women have taken up nursing the sick who can calculate the pains relieved, the diseases cured, the lives saved by that noble and unselfish body—the nurses in our public hospitals and in our homes. I hope it will ever be so. I mean that while Irishwomen may claim " this freedom " to follow careers, exercise the franchise, and realise the dreams of the " new woman," I hope and trust that it is as a mother, a daughter, a sister, a religious and social worker that the daughters of St. Brigid in greatest numbers will find their true vocation, and greatest potency for all that is " High and holy and of good report."

WOMEN AND EDUCATION.

I have already referred to the work of education to be accomplished in the home, chiefly by the mother. This is really the beginning of the education for true citizenship, *i.e.*, of men in the state of civilisation. A citizen is the member of the civil state lawfully established, where there is just and orderly government, some ruling, others obeying, some establishing and maintaining order, others respecting and carrying it out in their civil life. All the education of the home aims primarily at preparing men and women to be ultimately good citizens. But the education of the home is but a prelude to the larger education of the school, the university, and life. Education is really the training of the whole man for life, the drawing forth and developing all the faculties, physical, intellectual, moral and religious, which constitute in man, nature and human dignity. The securing of health and strength is the very beginning of the process. We have seen how the mother comes into this scheme. The process is continued

through school and college life by athletics and organised games. Even in the beginnings of intellectual development, the mother does much in directing aright the dawning and expanding reason. In after years women as teachers continue this work. We know what a large share the nuns in the various teaching Orders and their lay-helpers have in the work of intellectual education, especially in girls' schools, and even in preparatory boys' schools; also how much they do in training teachers for the National Schools throughout the land. Then there is the work of this army itself of lay female teachers. Who can calculate how much they have done to form the minds of the younger generation? But the moral and religious sides of education—the formation of character, the imparting of religious knowledge, and making this knowledge bear on life—all this is—to a very great extent the duty of women; the mother in the home, the teacher in the school and college. Women who have this privilege should esteem it highly and look upon it as the most sacred thing in their lives; it is woman's mission. They, by their own living example, in the first place, influence and form the minds and hearts of their pupils. What better definition of teaching can we find than Thring's, when he calls it the "transmission of life from the living, through the living, to the living." They are preaching from a pulpit living sermons. A teacher's power over pupils will depend upon what manner of woman she herself is. Pleasure in her work imparts pleasure to the pupils in their work; interest causes interest; order forms habits of order. In education therefore woman's influence is very great; and to-day and to-morrow in Ireland is bound to be greater still. God grant that as in all other fields of woman's activity it may be dominated by religion; otherwise it will destroy and not save the nation. Work then to educate citizens for a Christian state, where law, order, and respect for constituted authority may reign.

WOMEN AND SOCIAL WORK.

Now, as a last section of this discourse, I wish to speak of woman as a social worker. Here indeed she can do little as an individual. It is in combination with others that her power exists. In an excellent paper read a few years ago by Miss Edith O'Reilly a strong plea was put

forward for the establishment of a "Catholic Woman's League" with a central government here in Dublin, and branches all over the country. Father Lambert McKenna, S.J., also wrote a very useful pamphlet on the question in the "Messenger" series of Social Action. Though our people are very charitable, and will give their money very unstintingly to relieve suffering and advance social causes, they rarely give their "personal service." This is a branch of feminine activity which the Social League of Catholic Women is intended to foster. It aims at grappling with social and educational problems which will especially appeal to women, in the solution of which women are best qualified to deal. It aims at doing in Ireland work similar to that accomplished in France, Germany, and even in England, by the "Ladies of Charity" and kindred societies. Speakers on social subjects would be sent round the country to lecture on food, health, rearing of children, brightening the homes of the poor. All schemes for the betterment of home life, for providing of healthy amusement for people generally, also the housing problem, fighting sweated labour, the teaching of the arts and crafts to poorer boys and girls, instructing the less educated on the responsibilities and exercise of the vote, which women have now as well as men, visiting the poor in the slums and bringing them relief—all these in course of time with proper organization should be taken up by Catholic women banded together into various societies, but co-operating together under the patronage of the Catholic Church. I make a strong appeal to-night to the women of Ireland to come together and establish such a widespread organization with all the activities which I have mentioned and many more. Bring your Catholic training and ideals of home life which you have fostered in your own social circle into the wider world of the whole of Ireland, create in yourselves a "civic sense." Be interested in all Ireland, in its uplifting socially, intellectually, spiritually. Reflect what you could do for the purification of the Irish Stage and Picture House. If as a body Irishwomen made their influence felt on the Irish stage and Cinema, a complete change for the better would be effected in these places; you can help Catholic Truth also by working a branch of this Society and distributing its publications. You can foster the "Good Literature Campaign" in two

ways, first negatively by discouraging, in your districts, the reading of objectionable Sunday papers, bad novels, and un-Christian social pamphlets. You can do it positively by the sale and diffusion of Catholic newspapers and interesting books, which all may safely read. You can help the societies which look after fallen women, poor prisoners on release from gaol. You can fight proselytism and socialism. But for all this, careful organisation will be necessary. I hope as a result of the Catholic Truth Conference this year, and this appeal to Catholic women of Ireland, that a certain number at least will come together and form the nucleus of a national organisation of Irish Catholic women to co-operate with the Church, and the Irish State, in making Ireland a model Catholic Nation to teach the world the might of moral beauty and stamp God's image truly on the struggling soul.

CONCLUSION—A VISION OF THE FUTURE.

I wish to visualise the Irish woman of to-day and to-morrow as one of the greatest powers for good in this Catholic land. As a dominating figure I see the Irish woman of to-day modelling her life on Mary, the Mother of God, in love, in purity, in humility. I see the Irish mother of old, the queen of the Irish home, the giver of life, physical and spiritual, to her children, educating them to be worthy citizens of a great Catholic Nation. I see the young women of Ireland—daughters, sisters—in the home, in the cloister, in the professions teaching or following careers, dominated in their lives by Catholic principles, with strong characters but kindly dispositions, influencing all for good; promoting true charity and loving peace, while being in the world not of it; if in the fashion, never trampling on Catholic ideals, models of work, virtuous, diffusing good—both in the home and in society—holding firm to the teaching of St. Patrick throughout life, persevering to the end, till the day dawns and the shadows disappear “when the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.”

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